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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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November 2012

President's Message-The Feedline

By Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX

We finally got it together and made the field trip to Mt. Vaca spending a few hours with Skipp May WV6F walking around the hill top learning what it is like working on towers, repeaters, and antennas from a place none of us think too much about.

Jerry KD6WKY, Jerry KJ6SCC, Chris KD7TQO, my nine year old neighbor Jason, and I met at the fire house and drove across the valley and up the hill. I was surprised at how good the road was on the drive up the hill. It was really a lot of fun.

We have Merriment on Main coming up in a few weeks. Jerry KD6WKY will give us details on how to get our back ground checks done in time for the event. Further detail about MM will be hashed out at the club meeting this month.

Here is a picture of our antenna on the tower located at building #13, can you tell which one it is?

See you at the club meeting this week. 73!

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Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes will be available at the club meeting. We have experience technical difficulties in getting from our scribe to the publisher.

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive, KD6KWY

Nothing lasts forever. I remind myself of that all the time when something breaks, wears out, or I'm in pain. Well, a few weeks ago my power supply died on me that I used with my Kenwood TM-261A two meter FM transceiver here in my shack. The unit was pretty old but worked great. I don't think I ever put a real load on it with just one radio at 5 or 10 watts. The old PS was a 12 amp model.

What I liked best about it was that it didn't have a fan. The heat sinks were big enough to absorb the energy which meant it didn't make any noise. I found out it is impossible to find a PS any longer that doesn't have at least one fan on it.

I ended up purchasing a small MFJ 15 amp PS from HRO that works fine, but had a fan. I hoped the fan was thermostatically controlled so it wouldn't turn on until the unit got hot but no luck; flick the switch, fan on. What to do, what to do.

I decided to pop the top and take a look. After looking it over, I unplugged the fan and removed it from the back of the box. No more fan, no more noise. So far so good. The unit doesn't get hot, works fine and I'm happy. I'll keep the little fan in my junk box in case you want it for a project someday. J

I worked a couple of new countries this month on my HF radio, both DXpeditions. TT8TT over in Chad on 20 meter phone last one weekend afternoon I finally broke the pile-up if Europeans not listening to the operator calling North America Only, then working call areas. Those Spaniards operate like they drive I guess.

The other big DXpedition that I worked was the 3B9SP on Rodrigues Island just east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. That one was tough. I could see all the spots for the station but could never hear it well enough to work it. One morning about 7:30AM local time I saw a spot for them on the 40 meter band CW. I dialed them in but still nothing I could work with but I kept listening. Finally about 7:50AM the signal started peaking

a bit. I put out my call and he came back to me on the second or third call. I was using my wire dipole antenna and 500 watts power from my amplifier.

What was interesting was he was calling CQ and nobody was answering him which was totally different from the pile-ups I was experiencing on the higher bands during the afternoons. I confirmed later than I indeed was in their log by looking on their on-line log to check.

Thursday evening I worked two stations in Calicut, India VU3WII and VU3WIJ on 20 meter phone. I worked them long path with my little beam pointed south not north. The distance was over 17,000 miles in that direction, but the signal was stronger and they heard me over others working them short path north over the top. This is pretty rare to work long path, it was fun though.

As of this evening, I'm getting ready to work the ARRL November Sweepstakes CW contest. This is the biggie for domestic contest of the year. I hope to be tops in the East Bay Section this year but it is going to be tough with so many others in the contest.

This contest calls for a long involved exchange of information with the other station so errors are a problem if you go too fast. Here is a typical exchange from me to the other station: W1AW 123 A KD6WKY 92 EB. Get it? Call sign, serial number, precedent, my call sign, year first licensed, ARRL Section. All at 28 to 30 words per minute once I get going. I get all that info from the other station too. The multipliers are collecting all 83 ARRL sections. The old Ontario section is now four sections; Ontario North, Ontario South, Ontario East, and Toronto. I have already updated my logging program for this change.

I think I'll need 500 contacts to be competitive for first place in the Single Operator, Low Power, and Unassisted category. Unassisted means no spotting assistance of any kind. I usually do a run frequency so I park on a frequency and send TEST KD6WKY and wait for them to come to me. It's like fishing, you can troll or you can through out the bait and wait. Run frequencies tend to collect more attention and generate more contact than search and pounce.

As of Friday evening 840 logs have been submitted from the California QSO Party last month, only two logs were from Yolo County. K6Y was the county expedition that Marcus KI6WDX and I ran and did a fine job. The other station is a regular Yolo County station that logs in a few contacts each year. I'll be interested to see how many stations got a clean sweep of all 58 counties and if we were able to be their Yolo County station.

Good times in amateur radio depend on your interests. 73 and good DX!

Merriment on Main

November 27 at 5pm. Meet at Tax Advantage on Merchant Street in Vacaville. Talk in frequency is 147.510 MHz simplex.

We have about eight volunteers so far for MM and are looking for more help. Please contact Jerry Olive KD6WKY at 707.422.6777 during week or at home 707.469.8678 evenings for details.

You will need to complete a local back ground check to participate. It's no big deal. All it is is a one page form that they use to check you out.

This is a family event. We want to make sure the bad guys aren't out there among our families in downtown Vacaville.

Some have expressed their displeasure at the back ground check as a form of big government getting into their business. Others think their former security clearances somehow are enough and don't feel the need to show any concern for someone that doesn't know who they are.

Let me help you if you feel that way. Stay home. We don't need you or want you. If your ego is more important to you than supporting your community with a wonderful tree lighting event that everyone enjoys year after year, just park it.

If however you want to be a part of a community event like this to kick off the holiday spirit you are welcome to join! We need all the willing volunteers we can get.

Maps and details will be available at the club meeting to discuss and organize. This is the most popular club activity of the year with great participation.

All you need is a two meter HT and warm clothing. You will get a nifty read shirt too.

Take one evening out of your schedule and be a part of something great.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2011
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Richard Craig, KJ6MIB
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman KE6MDM

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Vaca Valley Radio Club
Christmas Dinner Reservation

Wednesday, December 12, 2012, 6:30 Dinner

Pietro's #2, 679 Merchant St., Vacaville

Cost is $20 per person and includes tax and tip. Make checks payable to VVRC. Reservation and payment must be received by Saturday, December 8.

Bring your reservation and payment to the November club meeting; mail to the club mailbox or hand deliver to the club treasurer, Bob Hewitt.

The family style dinner will consist of Spaghetti, Ravioli, Garden Green Salad and Garlic Bread Coffee, tea or soft drink is included Wine or Beer is available at the bar.

An inexpensive unwrapped gift to be used as a door prize is optional.

Got Generator?

11/02/2012

By Stan Horzepa, WA1LOU
Contributing Editor

This week, Surfin' considers portable power generators in the wake of another horrific storm.

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Sandy barreled through here Monday, but I was lucky: The tree man had done his work last month, so there was no tree damage on my property, except for a few small branches that landed without incident here and there. And my home lost power for only 23 hours (compared to last year's Halloween surprise snowstorm that kept us off the grid for over three days).

Despite my luck, there were queries again about buying a generator for the house. After another night of bumping into things in the dark, I am seriously considering such a purchase this time around.

Some of my co-workers (electrical engineering types) already own generators, so I asked around and received some tips about buying and using them, including a few that are probably not in compliance with the electrical code.

Online, *Popular Mechanics* offers some sound advice in its article titled "**How to Buy the Right Backup Generator for Your Disaster & Budget**."

The American Red Cross addresses questions about using a generator when disaster or emergency strikes in its article "**Safe Generator Use**."

From the ARRL website, you can download a June 1999 *QST* article called "**How to Choose and Use a Portable Power Generator**."

I will read all three articles while I figure out where to store enough gasoline to run a generator for three days or more!

Until next time, keep on surfin'!

Editor's Note—I have used a Kipor 1000 watt generator for various ham radio events for years.

ARRL Requests Hams Do Not Self-Deploy to Areas Affected by Hurricane Sandy

11/01/2012

Amateur Radio operators who want to assist those Sections affected by Hurricane Sandy ***should not self-deploy*** to those areas. "There are many ARRL Sections involved in the impact area, and each has different requirements on how they locate, credential and deploy volunteers," explained ARRL Emergency Preparedness Manager Mike Corey, KI1U. "If a need for manpower is identified that cannot be met locally or in the Section, Section leadership may contact other Sections for assistance.

If the need is still not met, Section leadership may then contact ARRL HQ for assistance."

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browse our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please email us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance.

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.2ØØ(-)
WV6F 44Ø.Ø25(+)
WV6F 44Ø.Ø25 – PL 127.3Hz

As Hurricane Sandy Wreaks Havoc on East Coast, Hams Heed Call to Help

Even though Hurricane Sandy was **declared a post-tropical cyclone** by the time it made its final landfall -- just 5 miles southwest of Atlantic City, New Jersey at about 8 PM EDT on Monday, October 29 -- the storm still had winds in excess of 80 miles per hour. Hams across the region, from the Carolinas to Maine, responded to requests for assistance and activated local nets, supported the Hurricane Watch Net's and the VoIP Hurricane Net's operations, assisted their local and state Emergency Operations Centers and provided assistance at shelters and wherever needed.

New Jersey

Northern New Jersey

Two hospitals in New Jersey requested assistance from radio amateurs. According to ARRL Northern New Jersey Section Emergency Coordinator George Sabbi, KC2GLG, the hospitals were experiencing issues with their communications systems they use for direct communications between these their facilities in Middlesex and Union Counties.

Sabbi said that a shelter in Bergen County utilized radio amateurs when it opened on Monday, October 29 until late in the morning the next day. "Operators went off duty for rest and came back on Tuesday. The Red Cross is working on getting more Amateur Radio resources into additional shelters, noting that travel is a restriction for many volunteers due to the numerous road closures all over the state. I've received several reports of repeaters being on backup power or off-the-air, and in all cases, we've moved to alternate frequencies."

Southern New Jersey

Through its Ham Aid program, the ARRL sent six VHF radios to Ocean County, New Jersey. ARRL Ocean County Emergency Coordinator Bob Murdock, WX2NJ, programmed them for deployment to the six shelters in Ocean County shelters today. One of the ARRL's National VOAD partners, **NECHAMA -- Jewish Response to Disaster**, provided transportation to Ocean County.

ARRL Southern New Jersey Section Emergency Coordinator John Zaruba, K2ZA, ran a Section Resource net on the SNJ ARES repeater at 7 AM, 1 PM and 7 AM each day to provide support to the County Emergency Coordinators. He sent requests, asking for six relief operators from within the Section to deploy to Atlantic County and another six relief operators to go to Ocean County. Both shoreline counties used Amateur Radio in the shelters run by the American Red Cross.

"As of Wednesday, October 31, commercial communications are coming back on line in the inland counties, with some counties, such as Mercer County, starting to use radio amateurs to assist in damage assessment as roads become more passable," explained ARRL Southern New Jersey Section Manager Gary Wilson, K2GW. "The other counties are being polled for mutual aid operator support to Ocean and Atlantic County. I believe John is also starting communications with the Eastern Pennsylvania, Northern New Jersey and Western Massachusetts Sections about their eventually providing relief operators."

Wilson said that the NJ2EM operation at the New Jersey State Police's State Office of Emergency Management was secured on October 31, "as they have commercial contact now with all of the county EOCs, although their statewide 220 MHz repeater is still available for county-to-county communication."

On Thursday, November 1, Wilson told the ARRL that the "communications emergency" in the nine counties that make up the ARRL's Southern New Jersey Section is over. "While the recovery will take a long time, commercial communications systems are being restored in most parts of the Section," he said. "Amateur Radio emergency operations are continuing in Ocean and Atlantic Counties under the direction of their County Emergency Coordinators."

Ocean County Emergency Coordinator Bob Murdock, WX2NJ, said that the six shelters in the county are being consolidated into one shelter. "At this time, he thinks the one last shelter might remain operational for about a week," Wilson said. "The ARRL Ham Aid VHF radios are working great there. In Atlantic County, Emergency Coordinator John Miller, KC2TNV, reported that relief operators are needed to give the operators a needed rest. Zaruba is currently polling the other counties in the Section for mutual aid operator support to Atlantic County. Both shoreline counties will continue to determine their long-term Amateur Radio needs on a daily basis, based on the American Red Cross' sheltering plans and the state of commercial communication restoration."

Wilson told the ARRL that one of the reasons that New Jersey is somewhat better prepared than other states is that New Jersey Office of Emergency Management won't approve a County Emergency Management Plan unless it includes a RACES annex. "As a result, *every* county EOC has permanent Amateur Radio capability on 2 meters simplex, a 220 MHz radio aimed at the NJ2EM 220 MHz repeater that covers the entire state, 2 meter APRS for text messaging and HF capability on 75 meters LSB," he explained. "These are tested once each month on statewide nets. Similarly each American Red Cross chapter tests its 2 meter capability monthly with the central Red Cross station at N2ARC in Princeton, which then links to the State Emergency Operations Center in West Trenton. And of course, each county has a 2 meter repeater designated for their own work at the county level."

Wilson thanked all of the ARES/RACES operators in Southern New Jersey Section: "You showed that planning, regular monthly tests and dedication pay off when it comes to helping our fellow citizens in a communication emergency. When all else fails, Amateur Radio works!"

Eastern New York

The Eastern New York Section Coordination Net on the N2ACF system operated throughout Hurricane Sandy, concluding their operations on Tuesday at noon. According to

Eastern New York Section Emergency Coordinator David Galletly, KM2O, Section leadership assessed the incoming reports and determined the duration of continued operations following the passage of Sandy through the Section when the net resumed on Tuesday morning. Even though the formal nets are over, the system will still be available for informal use by those stations that still need emergency communication coordination.

Galletly asked the Emergency Coordinators in the Sections to check in to the net when it resumes "to report on continued deployments and support activities. Using this information we will try to determine if any reallocation of operators by mutual aid is needed and prepare requests for shifting resources to areas in greatest need."

Following a request from Westchester County Emergency Coordinator Tom Raffaelli, WB2NHC, operators from the Northern and Central Districts in the ARRL's Eastern New York Section have begun to deploy to relieve Westchester operators. Galletly and Central District Emergency Coordinator Leonard Signoretti, N2LEN, arrived in Westchester on Thursday, November 1, to provide relief shelter duty. Operators from Albany will arrive in Westchester later on Thursday. Galletly said that he is requesting additional relief operators from other counties in the Section.

Connecticut

Hams associated with SKYWARN were very active in Connecticut. "Assistant District Emergency Coordinator for SKYWARN Jim McBride, KD1LD, kept all of us updated about current conditions and did a great job working with our very dedicated SKYWARN Emergency Coordinators who coordinated activity in their counties," explained ARRL Connecticut Section Manager Betsey Doane, K1EIC. "We had hams in Hartford, Fairfield, New London and Windham Counties who participated in the SKYWARN nets. We needed a fill-in for New Haven County, so Craig Lang, W1MHZ, spontaneously volunteered, even under his own emergency conditions. He ran a few nets while camped out at his neighbor's home; as I understand it, he had to be evacuated. His work was commendable."

Many shelters throughout the Section were supported by radio amateurs, some of whom are also CERT trained. Stamford Emergency Coordinator Jon Perelstein, WB2RYV, reported that eight volunteers and two American Red Cross disaster leaders -- most of whom are members of the Stamford Amateur Radio Association -- supported the three Stamford shelters, provided backup communications for Red Cross between the shelters, the Emergency Operations Center and the Red Cross chapter house in Darien. Those staffing the shelters did everything from intake to cooking to support for the elderly and infirm. Other hams staffed the Citizen Service Line, also in Stamford. This service provides a way for Stamford residents to phone in and request information about evacuation plans. The hams also took reports of downed trees and power lines for dispatch of Connecticut Light & Power and city work crews.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues --------- $20.00 _____
Each Family Member -- $ 2.00 _____
Student ---------- $ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation --- _____
Call/Name badge -------- $11.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues ---------- $37.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total ---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____
DATE:_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143